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Dec 53

Country - Czechoslovakia

Subject - Conditions in Milotice, Bruntal District: Agriculture/Unsuccessful Attempt to Form JZD/Local Organizations/Industry/Medical Facilities/Communist Regulations

Place Acquired [REDACTED] 25X1A6a

Date Acquired - To Apr 53

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1.

Agriculture

2. "Milotice is a village in the district of Bruntal (former Sudetenland). It has about 350 inhabitants, many of whom have found employment in the factories of Bruntal or other neighboring towns. Agriculturally this part of the country is poor, owing to rocky terrain which is suitable for pastures. Altogether there are about 19 little farms in the village. The largest is that of Jan Kacura, consisting of 15 hectares. The rest of the farms have not more than five to seven hectares each.
3. "Before World War II the majority of the inhabitants were Germans. They were expelled after 1945. Settlers from all parts of Czechoslovakia came to live here. Although the fields of Milotice were always suitable for pastures only, the Communists ordered deliveries of wheat, rye, barley, oats, poppyseeds, sugar beets, flax and potatoes. The farmers were compelled to grow these crops. Only a small part of the land was allowed to remain as pasture. Previously every farm had six to 10 cows; now there are not more than 50 cows in the whole village.

Attempt to Form JZD

4. "The Communists also attempted to set up a JZD [farmer's cooperative] in Milotice, although it was practically impossible to join the little fields split all over the hillsides. Although the local Communists tried hard, they were not successful. The main obstacle was the opposition of the new settlers, many of whom were people from Volyna who knew collectivisation from their own experience. The rest of the inhabitants were rather passive, awaiting the results. By the end of 1952 it was finally decided that a JZD of Type I would be set up, i.e. every farmer would till his own land. An exception was made for two farmers, members of the JZD, Jan Gaidel, Sr. and Jan Gric, who had their

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ridges ploughed down.

5. "Fifteen farmers joined the JZD: Jan Gajdos, Sr., Frantisek Hlubilek, Simon Palubcik, Ondrej Gula, Vasil Dancicha, Marie Skopikova, Jan Kacur, Jan Cocotka, Jan Gric and Jan Maturkanic, Sr. Ondrej Dzak was not accepted into the JZD because he openly criticised land collectivization (he had been repatriated from the USSR). The following farmers refused to join the JZD: Michal Jurco, Simon Danci, Vasil Fesic and Josef Hruska.
6. "Following were among the members of the Preparatory Committee of the JZD: (fnu) Vasut, who later became secretary to the MNV, then left the village and afterwards died; and Frantisek Dostal, teacher at the local primary school, now a member of the MNV. He seems to be a decent person who was compelled to accept these political functions to keep his job. He does not do more than he has to.
7. "The JZD really existed only 'on paper'. The local farmers publicly ridiculed the local organizers. They elected Jan Kacur JZD chairman, just after he had been released from the forced labour camp in Jachymov where he had served a two-year term for anti-State activities.
8. "The activity of the JZD involved continuous meetings because nobody felt like doing real work. One member would say that his horses were ill and could not work. Another one made the excuse that he had to bring timber from the wood and could not therefore lend his horse team. And so it went on. It was apparent that nobody was interested in the scheme. In a month the JZD broke down. At first the members started leaving it individually, later in groups. Finally only Palubcik, Hlubilek, Kacur (chairman), Gula and Cocotka remained. In the end even these faithful had to walk out, having no other choice. In spring 1953 rumours were circulating that the Communists would have another try at organizing a JZD. According to the rumours it was to be a type III JZD.

Local Organizations

9. "The Chairman of the MNV at Milotice used to be Metodej Musil, who was recalled in February 1953. He received a 'commendatory decree' for the services he had done while in office, i.e. imposing heavy fines on villagers. He fined Ondrej Fabini 1,000 Cr. because his dog was running in the fields. Another 'service' involved the withdrawal of ration cards from people who refused to take part in 'voluntary' brigades.

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10. "The secretary to the MNV used to be (fnu) Vasut who went to Skrbovice at the end of 1952 and then died. The name of his successor is unknown
11. "Among other members of the MNV were:

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(a) Jan Hlubilek, head of the agricultural department. This man

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could be easily bribed. It was publicly known that he had distributed allocations of groats and bran to his personal friends only. He was especially unpopular among the Slovaks, because he used to address them rudely. He was a registered Party member and a member of the JZD while it existed. He forced other farmers to surrender prescribed quotas. He was also responsible for denouncing several peasants. Michal Danci was sentenced to two months for non-fulfillment of delivery quotas. Josef Hruska was sentenced to five months on similar charges. Hlubilek also reported people who were listening to foreign broadcasts or who were selling on the black market. He reported Vasil Fesic, a Slovak invalid from World War I for listening to foreign stations and Jan Gajdos Sr., selling horses to gypsies.

- (b) Simon Palubcik - head of the Agricultural Department. A Slovak. He assisted when delivery quotas were being forced from peasants, but he did not report anybody personally.
- (c) Josef Indig, a building worker employed at the building department of the State Farm at Bruntal was also a member of the Local National Committee. He developed no activities and did not attend meetings. He was very popular in the village.
- (d) Jan Zgibor was at one time chairman of the local Party organisation and manager of the local inn. In spring 1953 [REDACTED] 25X1X6 he had been arrested.
- (e) Josef Sotka was MNV treasurer and a railway employee. He was also in charge of the local fire brigade. He was a known Communist fanatic, who kept strictly to his orders. Everybody in the village was afraid of him.
- (f) The local school-master, Frantisek Dostal, was also a member of the MNV.

12. "The local Party organisation was the only important organisation in the village. Most of the village inhabitants were members but ignored the meetings completely. The chairman was Jan Zgibor, [REDACTED] not sure whether he is still holds his office. Other members were: Frantisek Hlubilek, Simon Palubcik, Jan Cocotka, Ondrej Gula, Marie Skopikova and Jan Maturkanic Sr. Jan Kacur, who lived at No. 29 was a Party candidate. Jan Gajdos Sr. was later expelled. These were the prominent Party members; the rest were so-called 'members on paper'.

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13. "The Youth Association, Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship League and Pioneers had no units in the village. The Women's Association had four members.
14. "The local Firemen Association consisted of nine men and four or five youths (dorost). The Commander, Josef Sotka, was also manager of the firemen's equipment store opposite the House of Culture. According to regulations the firemen were supposed to hold regular meetings and training exercises every week. Actually they held them once a month or once in two months.
15. Industry
"Communist propaganda is boasting what has been done for the benefit of the country people. The village of Milotice gives a different picture. The Communists say that small factories and plants are moved to the countryside, thus giving opportunity to village people to earn more money without having to travel to distant industrial towns. There are no traces in Milotice of such activity. Instead one can see ruins of farms and family houses. Small industrial units built by private entrepreneurs have been either moved to the interior or allowed to disintegrate. The Communists could not care less how the local population make their living - whether they will have to travel several kilometers every day to work or whether they will have to seek other jobs. At Milotice there used to be a small factory producing varnishes, paints and dyes - the Ludvik Marx firm, employing 44 people. The authorities ordered it closed down. The machinery was taken to Komarov near Opava. The employees were simply fired or transferred to other factories at Bruntal, Krnov and elsewhere.
16. Medical Facilities
"Another point in Communist propaganda concerns the medical service for village people. The truth is that people from Milotice have to visit a doctor at Bruntal. Expectant or nursing mothers have to wait for when Dr. (fnu) Caha feels like calling at the village, which happens usually once a year. His last visit was in November 1952. Although his visits were announced more frequently, he never arrived when expected. People say that Dr. Caha is too busy as a Party member to have time for his patients.
17. "The cattle are no better off. The district veterinary surgeon, Dr. (fnu) Kriy, never comes to the village unless there is an epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease or dysentery.
18. Communist Regulations
"Although people are forced to surrender delivery quotas punctually, the collection is badly organised. Milk is collected every morning between 6:00 and 7:00 am at Mrs. Truda Baranova's, where it is also tested and then taken by lorry to Bruntal. Other produce must be delivered personally by the farmers to Collecting Centers at Bruntal.

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19. "Most villagers loathe the Communists and their measures but are helpless. They express their hatred by boycotting various actions organised by the Communists. The Communists supply the Culturel House with Communist and Soviet propaganda films. Films like 'Mitchurin' and 'The Fall of Berlin' are shown to empty houses. On the other hand, when an old Czech film 'Marysa' was played, the house was full. No theatre exists in the village and reperatory companies never come - although the Communist papers are full of articles about the successes of 'village theatres'.
 20. "No dances are held, these being a 'remanat of bourgeois times'. Once the people at Milotice decided to arrange an unofficial dancing party with only one accordion and one violin. LThe result was a fine and a ban on all similar entertainments.
 21. "In 1950 the hatred against Communists resulted in such actions as the destruction of some machinery in the saw-mill at Bruntal and the spreading of anti-Communist leaflets. Everal people were arrested and sentenced, among them Stefan Zan, Michal Zan, Michal Andoga and Jan Kacur.
 22. "The Communists have succeeded in creating a village proletariat because, after surrendering their delivery quotas, the peasants have nothing left to buy clothes or visit the towns. They have not even enough money to buy supplies of firewood for the winter; they steal it at night in the woods. Although this has been practiced for some time, not a single case of theft has been investigated. The people are doing it either very skillfully, or, which is more probable, the whole village, including Communists and non-Communists, steals - because there is no other alternative. [REDACTED] a forestry employee who complained that 10 cubic metres of oakwood had been stolen from his rayon, but any investigation would be useless because he could not tell whether people from Spilov, Jeseni or Milotice were responsible.
 23. "Illegal pig-slaughtering is very common. In the case of official slaughtering, the pork and fats must be surrendered at the collecting center at Bruntal, run by Mrs. Marie Kaniokova. Even skins have to be surrendered, according to an order issued sometime in 1952.
 24. "People also engage in illegal distilling from sugar bought on the black market. In August or September 1952 the houses of Fesic and Gula were searched and tools for distilling confiscated.
 25. "Inspection of cattle and poultry have been rare. Once a year lists are made out. There is no local broadcasting system in the village. Now and then people are invited to take part in working brigades, but as a rule they take part only in those for which they were paid, usually at the State Farms. There is a local newspaper called 'New Village of the Bruntal district' (Nova vesnice Bruntalska) which cost one Crown (old currency) per copy.

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26. "The local peasants own some agricultural machinery, but there is not a single tractor in the village. During the harvest of 1952 they were forbidden to use their own threshing machines and had to wait for the machinery to arrive from the STS (State Tractor Station) in Bruntal. When it finally arrived the STS people were not in a position to cope with the work. In the end the private threshing machines had to be used. Before and during the harvest special fire-pickets had to be set up, consisting of one firman and one ordinary citizen. They were on duty in the fields from 2100 till 0400 hours. Absence from duty was fined by 200 crowns.
27. "At the beginning of January 1953 all people in Milotice were requested to re-register with the police. The last pages of their Identity Cards had to be stamped by their employers. There were also rumours that House Books would be introduced but they had not materialised before April."

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